

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
USSN 09/987,078
Attorney Docket Q66354
December 29, 2003

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REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are all the claims pending in the application.

In the last Office Action claims 1-4 inclusive were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by GB 1,459,781. Claims 1-3, 5 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Stewart et al. Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Landis. Claim 6 was apparently not acted upon.

Independent Claims 1, 2, 3 and 5 have been amended to more clearly define the present invention. Reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

According to the teachings of the three references relied upon by the Examiner in the last Office Action, Urea prills are cooled by passing them through a fluidized bed of prills. The British reference further suggests improving such cooling by providing coiled pipes immersed in the fluidized bed of Urea prills. Therefore, these three references suffer at least from the drawbacks set forth at page 3, lines 11-13 of the present application, that is the requirement of an air booster compressor and an appropriate refrigerator system for said fluidizing air flow. The problem to be solved by the present invention is that of improving the prior art by providing a method and device for obtaining cooled urea prills which are simple to carry out, reliable and do not require high investment and operating costs (see page 4, lines 1-4 of the present application).

It is clear that none of the three references disclose the feature of cooling the prills collecting on the bottom of the prilling tower such that cooling of the urea prills advantageously

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takes place directly on the latter. In this respect it is noted that according to these prior art teachings the cooling takes place within the fluidized bed, that is well above the collecting bottom of the prilling tower.

Thanks to the present invention it is now possible to obtain an effective and reliable cooling of the urea prills while at the same time avoiding the requirement of costly in energy consuming air booster compressors and fluidizing air refrigeration systems. Independent Claims 1, 2, 3 and 5 have been amended to more clearly bring out the advantages of cooling the cooling bottom. The independent claims now specifically call for the cooling of the collecting bottom such that cooling urea prills takes place directly on said cooling bottom. Therefore, it is submitted that Claims 1-7 inclusive are clearly patentable over the teachings of the three references relied upon in the last Office Action. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that Claim 1-7 inclusive be allowed and the application passed to issue forthwith.

If for any reason the Examiner is unable to allow the application on the next Office Action and feels that an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issue, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney for the purpose of arranging such an interview.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: December 29, 2003